The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. TRONE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TRONE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 7153, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. TRONE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7153, as amended, the Department of Veterans Affairs Principles of Benefits Automation Act, introduced by Ranking Member BOST.

This bill provides clarification on the sense of Congress on the automation of benefits claims and requires the VA to submit to Congress a plan for modernization of the information technology systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

As the VA moves toward greater automation, we must ensure that the VA does automation the right way for all stakeholders, including both veterans and the workforce. It is also important for the VA to identify systems in need of modernization to support successful implementation of bills, such as the PACT Act, and important initiatives such as the Secretary's announcement of several new presumptions.

I will reinforce that. On the topic of automation, it is not the intent of Congress or the VA to use automation on claims to eliminate, reduce, or contract out the duties of the VBA workforce. We intend to conduct close oversight of the use of automation and potential expansion. This bill is part of those efforts.

When implemented in the right way, automation has the potential to reduce the day-to-day burden of employees by diminishing menial tasks and allowing the dedicated VA staff to focus on the kind of work that truly needs a human touch. Such an approach stands to benefit the ultimate consumer of the VA: our veterans.

Madam Speaker, I support this bill and encourage my colleagues to support it as well, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 7153, the Department of Veterans Affairs Principles of Benefits Automation Act.

The VA is embracing automation more than ever before. The early results are promising. When used properly, automation can improve claims processing for veterans. However, I am concerned that the VA has already started multiple automation projects without a clear plan or measurable goals. There is no consistent guidance from the VA on when, why, or how automation should be used.

H.R. 7153 will establish the sense of Congress that the VA should increase automation in benefits processing, according to certain principles. Automation should increase the speed, accuracy, and consistency of claims processing. Automation should also enhance employee productivity. Automation should always protect veterans' privacy and preserve their rights to due process.

However, automation should not necessarily eliminate or reduce the VBA workforce. Employees should always make the final decision about approving claims and granting benefits. Let me be clear: The sense of Congress is that automation should enhance and support VBA employees, not replace them. I think these guiding principles will improve the claims process for veterans and beneficiaries.

Finally, my bill will require VA to submit a plan to Congress to modernize its benefits IT system over the next 5 years. This plan is crucial.

The expansion of benefits for toxic-exposed veterans will put an incredible strain on these IT systems. We need to be ready.

Madam Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TRONE. Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 7153, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. TRONE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7153, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 25 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1831

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SCHRIER) at 6 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 6824;
H.R. 6825;
H.R. 5658.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PRESIDENT'S CUP CYBER SECURITY COMPETITION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6824) to authorize the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency of the Department of Homeland Security to hold an annual cybersecurity competition relating to offensive and defensive cybersecurity disciplines, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MALINOWSKI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 386, nays 31, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 183]

YEAS—386

Adams	Cammack	Dean
Aderholt	Carbajal	DeFazio
Aguilar	Cárdenas	DeGette
Allen	Carey	DeLauro
Allred	Carl	DelBene
Amodei	Carson	Delgado
Armstrong	Carter (GA)	Demings
Auchincloss	Carter (LA)	DeSaulnier
Axne	Cartwright	DesJarlais
Bacon	Case	Deutch
Baird	Casten	Diaz-Balart
Balderson	Castor (FL)	Dingell
Banks	Castro (TX)	Doggett
Barr	Cawthorn	Doyle, Michael
Barragán	Chabot	F.
Bass	Cheney	Duncan
Beatty	Cherfilus-	Dunn
Bentz	McCormick	Ellzey
Bera	Chu	Escobar
Bergman	Cicilline	Eshoo
Beyer	Clark (MA)	Espaillat
Bice (OK)	Clarke (NY)	Estes
Bilirakis	Cleaver	Evans
Bishop (GA)	Cloud	Fallon
Bishop (NC)	Clyburn	Feenstra
Blumenauer	Cohen	Ferguson
Blunt Rochester	Cole	Fischbach
Bonamici	Comer	Fitzgerald
Bost	Connolly	Fitzpatrick
Bourdeaux	Cooper	Fleischmann
Bowman	Correa	Fletcher
Boyle, Brendan	Costa	Foster
F.	Courtney	Foxx
Brady	Craig	Frankel, Lois
Brooks	Crawford	Franklin, C.
Brown (MD)	Crenshaw	Scott
Brown (OH)	Crist	Fulcher
Brownley	Crow	Gaetz
Buchanan	Cuellar	Gallagher
Bucshon	Curtis	Gallego
Bush	Davids (KS)	Garamendi
Bustos	Davidson	Garbarino
Butterfield	Davis, Danny K.	Garcia (CA)
Calvert	Davis, Rodney	Garcia (IL)